

# SPECIAL

# Director's Message



## Oregon Housing and Community Services

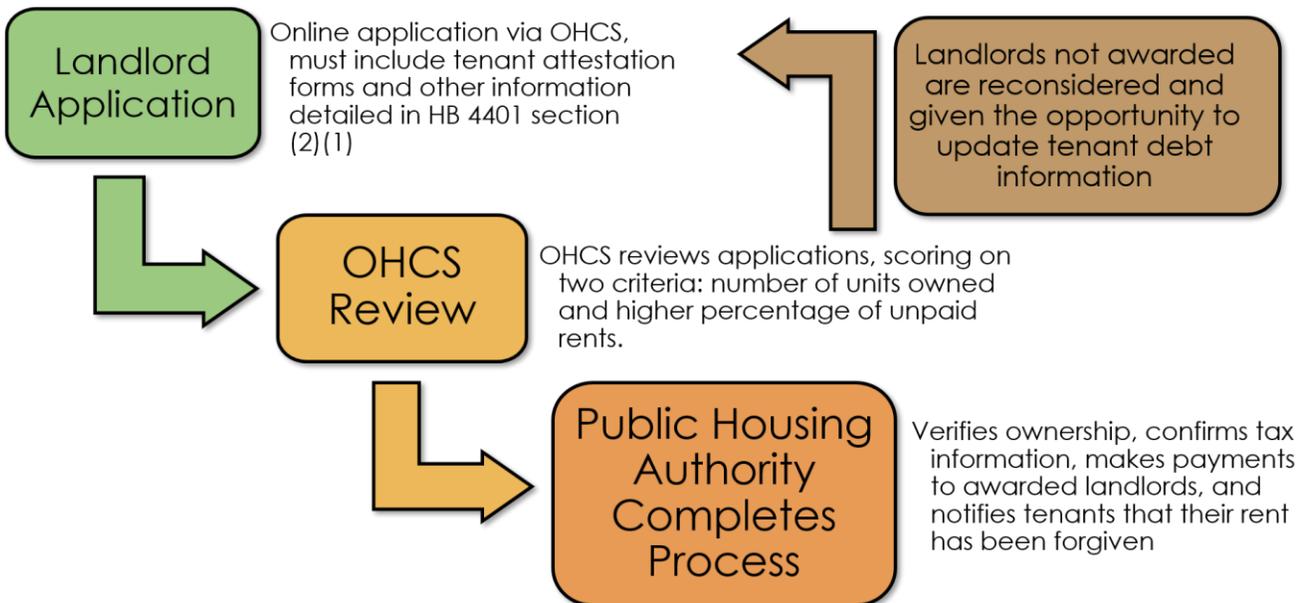
December 22, 2020

Dear Partners,

Yesterday the Oregon Legislature met for the third special session of 2020 convened on the winter solstice. The shortest day of the year felt in many ways like the longest, but I'm overjoyed to report that a great deal was accomplished, including the extension of the eviction moratorium and \$200 million for rent assistance. OHCS is incredibly grateful for these resources, which will allow us to provide stability for so many Oregon families.

### EVICTION MORATORIUM

To help ensure Oregonians can remain in their homes, [HB 4401](#) established a new eviction moratorium that ends June 30, 2020. This moratorium is different than past moratoria enacted in the state. Tenants must document that they have experienced financial hardship impacting their ability to pay rent after March 16, 2020, the date of the Governor's Stay Home, Save Lives orders. Please see this [helpful summary of the eviction moratorium](#) from our partners at the Oregon Law Center.



### LANDLORD COMPENSATION FUND

HB 4401 also established the Landlord Compensation Fund. I submitted [testimony on the bill](#) (then LC 18) over the weekend to detail how the program works. Unlike past rent assistance, landlords can directly apply for these resources through an online application portal that will open in late-January. Please see the image below that details the application process and visit the [OHCS webpage](#) to sign up for email updates. This program has been seeded with \$150 million in State General Funds.

### TENANT-BASED RENT ASSISTANCE

Legislators also allocated \$50 million for traditional, tenant-initiated rent assistance. These resources will be delivered regional Community Action Agencies and other housing assistance providers that will receive Emergency Solution Grants from the open [Request for Applications](#). We look forward to sharing more about how to access these resources in the January Director's Message.

### EMERGENCY FUNDS

[SB 5731](#) included multiple allocations to the Joint Emergency Board: \$400 to respond to COVID-19 needs, \$100 M to respond to wildfire needs, and \$100 M to respond to any new, emergent needs. The Emergency Board will likely meet before the 2021 regular session to allocate resources.

### FEDERAL FUNDS ON THE WAY

Just to keep things interesting in a 2020 sort of way, Congress has passed the next stimulus package late last night. This includes [much needed housing assistance: \\$25 billion in rent and utility assistance](#), which will result in more than \$282 million coming to Oregon. End of the year actions include a fixed rate 4% for Low Income Housing Tax Credits, a long-time [National Council of State Housing Finance Agency](#) priority that will help OHCS and our partners better leverage this federal resource. We're waiting to find out how exactly these new housing assistance funds will be distributed by OHCS and how the funds will overlay with state resources. I'll send out more updates on these resources in the new year.

Phew what a year it has been! If you're like me, you're counting down the days until we put 2020 behind us. The holiday season is a time of gratitude and reflection. As we head into the new year, I wish you peace, fresh air, and creature comforts (I'll be cuddling up to watch a few low-key Netflix videos with my kids). Thank you for all you do to ensure our neighbors have a safe, stable and affordable place to call home and for stepping up to the challenges that 2020 has presented with grace and partnership. Your work has helped (and will continue to help) thousands of Oregonians.

May you have a peaceful holiday season.

Best regards,



Margaret Salazar  
Executive Director

